

THE HEREDITY OF THE STEWARTS

A Remarkably Varied Family

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THE Stewart heredity presents more problems than does that of the Tudors, which was treated in the last number of the REVIEW, and inherent difficulties face us from the commencement, when we consider the character of the first of the Stewart line to ascend the throne of England.

KING JAMES I

PARENTS.

Henry, Lord Darnley.
Mary, Queen of Scotland.

GRANDPARENTS.

Matthew Stewart, Earl of Lennox.
Margaret Douglas.
James V, King of Scotland.
Mary of Guise.

GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.

John, Earl of Lennox.
Anne Stewart.
Archibald, Earl of Angus.
Margaret Tudor.
James IV, King of Scotland.
Margaret Tudor.
Claude, Duke of Guise.
Antoinette de Bourbon.

As in the case of the Tudors, the ostensible ancestry of James I is set out as above, and one is immediately struck with the fact that his characteristics have but little resemblance to those of any of these ancestors. This fact was so obvious, that from an early period doubts arose as to his parentage, some considering that he was the son of Mary by David Rizzio, while others contended that he was a changeling. Both of these assumptions, but especially the latter,

were based on his plebeian appearance, want of dignity, and extreme personal timidity, none of these characteristics, except possibly the second, appearing in any of the 'official' ancestors. The assumption, however, of a complete plebeian descent would seem to be unwarrantable, not only from its inherent improbability, but even more from the fact that no one of these traits reappeared in any of James's own descendants, which on such a hypothesis, must surely have occurred.

There is certainly a greater likelihood of the paternity of Rizzio, both from the circumstances of the moment, and from biological theory. David Rizzio was the son of an Italian musician, but of the general characteristics of his father and of his remoter ancestry we know nothing; he himself was plain in his person, physically timid, and showed a complete absence of tact and *savoir-faire* when raised to the position for which he was totally unfitted. While James, as has been said, was also uncouth in his person and physically timid, he by no means altogether lacked tact and *savoir-faire*; the absence of these qualities was more marked in some of his descendants.

James was, of course, extraordinarily unlike his mother, in whom good looks and natural dignity were conspicuous; the former she inherited chiefly from her father, the latter from her mother. On Darnley's side there were equal good looks, but neither he nor his father, Lennox, were in any way noted for dignity of bearing, though Lennox, at least, did not lack physical courage, while his wife, Margaret Douglas, was a woman of strong and virile character, as befitted a descendant of the Douglasses and the Tudors. Neither a plebeian appearance nor

physical timidity could well have descended therefore on James from his 'official' ancestry, though the Lennox line might possibly be responsible for his lack of dignity, and it is certainly conceivable that the timidity was a purely 'acquired' characteristic, occasioned by the brutal murder of Rizzio almost before his mother's eyes shortly before his birth. A Rizzio paternity seems, however, to be indicated by another trait in James's character, his curious pedantry mixed with a good deal of shrewdness, qualities which may well have been derived from a partly middle-class ancestry; there would, in any case, be some Tudor descent to account for his attachment to learning.

On the whole, James's own character seems to indicate a Rizzio rather than a Darnley descent; considerations which point the other way on this question of his paternity can be more fully discussed in the next section.

CHARLES I

PARENTS.

King James I.
Anne of Denmark.

GRANDPARENTS.

Henry, Lord Darnley.
Mary, Queen of Scotland.
Frederick II, King of Denmark.
Sophia of Mecklenburg.

GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.

Matthew, Earl of Lennox.
Margaret Douglas.
James V, King of Scotland.
Mary of Guise.
Christian II, King of Denmark.
Dorothea of Saxe-Lauenburg.
Ulric, Duke of Mecklenburg.
Elizabeth of Denmark.

Charles I, his brother Henry, Prince of Wales, and his sister Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, were thorough patricians by nature, totally unlike their father in this respect. The fidelity of their mother, Anne

of Denmark, has been questioned, but with little reason, and in their cases the ostensible ancestry adequately accounts for their characters.

Henry, Prince of Wales, whose early death was so deeply lamented, showed promise of a high order, and was undoubtedly abler than his younger brother. Elizabeth was a woman of much charm, considerable mental vigour, and inexhaustible vitality, very tenacious both in her affections and her dislikes. Charles's dominating characteristics were undoubtedly obstinacy and lack of tact, allied, however, to many excellent qualities, great dignity, high morality, and much love of culture.

It is obvious that Charles, and to an even greater extent his sister Elizabeth, bore many resemblances to their grandmother, Mary Stewart, and to her immediate ancestry. From Darnley quite as much as from Rizzio the tactlessness shown by Charles may have emanated, and in the cases of all three of James I's children, a Darnley descent fits the position better than one from Rizzio.

Turning to the Danish ancestry, we find Anne of Denmark a good-humoured woman, very fond of gaiety and amusement, with ordinary mental abilities, but not below the average. Frederick II of Denmark was a quiet, prudent man, of rigid principles, particularly with regard to religion, while his wife, Sophia, was a woman much above the average, of great intellectual capacity, noted especially as a patroness of scientists. Turning to the great-grandparents of Charles I, Christian III of Denmark was an excellent and upright monarch, very simple in his manner of life, hardly a strong character, being much under the influence of his domineering wife, Dorothea. No definite character-picture of Ulric of Mecklenburg or of his wife seems to have come down, but the Duke, who was a lover of the arts, appears to have been a sensible ruler. His wife was a sister of Christian III, and their father, Frederick I of Denmark, was therefore doubly the ancestor of Charles I. Frederick was a somewhat hard and unlovable character, but showed sagacity and pru-

dence in the difficult times following the introduction of the Reformation.

Common sense and prudence seem, on the whole, to have been the keynote of the ancestry of Anne of Denmark, particularly among the men; two at least of the women showed higher mental attainments, coupled perhaps with less prudence. Prince Henry probably took mainly from this side, Charles obviously took less; his wrong-headedness has no counterpart among his immediate Danish and German ancestors. Determination some of them certainly showed, but determination of a more sensible kind, and the more unfortunate features of Charles's character were almost certainly derived from his paternal grandparents, and more particularly from the grandfather, whether Darnley or Rizzio, both of whom and also Mary Stewart, were alike wrong-headed.

Charles's love of culture was derivable from several sources, his high moral character, in the sexual sense, from his grandfather, Frederick of Denmark, a most upright man in this respect, and like Charles himself, devoted to his wife. This strong family affection was equally conspicuous in Anne of Denmark and in her daughter Elizabeth.

The character, in short, of Charles is far more obviously derived from his ostensible ancestors than is that of his father, and a study of James's family seems finally to tilt the balance in favour of the Darnley descent, strengthened as this also is by the characteristics of the next generation. This leaves a part of James's character quite unexplained by any known heredity, we can in this event only conclude that some qualities, dormant for an exceptional number of generations, re-appeared in him, and in him only.

CHARLES II AND JAMES II

PARENTS.

King Charles I.
Henrietta Maria of France.

GRANDPARENTS.

King James I.
Anne of Denmark.
Henry IV, King of France.
Marie de Medici.

GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.

Henry, Lord Darnley.
Mary, Queen of Scotland.
Frederick II, King of Denmark.
Sophia of Mecklenburg.
Antoine de Bourbon.
Jeanne d'Albret.
Francis, Grand Duke of Tuscany.
Joanna of Austria.

There are few more interesting studies in history than the characters of these two brothers, both so strongly marked, and both so different in almost every respect. Selfishness was the keynote of Charles's character; he hated taking trouble, but could work hard enough when he liked. He possessed an excellent memory, strong powers of observation, and was probably the wittiest monarch that ever lived. By disposition he was tolerant and good-natured, and, though, of course, a complete sensualist, not given either to drink or to gambling. Withal he took great interest in both literature and science, particularly in the latter.

James's intellectual attainments were of an obviously lower order, but he not only could work, but loved hard work. Of a commanding appearance, better looking than Charles, he was stiff and restrained in manner, though not incapable of a gracious courtesy. Tactless obstinacy was clearly both his worst defect and at the same time the keynote of his character. The difference between the brothers was well summed up by Buckingham, "The king could see things if he would, the duke would see things if he could." Licentiousness was the one characteristic that the two shared in common.

Of their two sisters who lived to maturity, the character of Mary of Orange, which will be further considered when we come to her

son, William III, bore, on the whole, more resemblance to that of James ; but the lively and vivacious Henrietta of Orleans, with her intense love of pleasure coupled with considerable mental ability, was almost the female counterpart of her brother Charles.

Let us now turn to the maternal ancestry of this very interesting family. Henrietta Maria, a woman of a somewhat frivolous and shallow mind, incapable of concentration, showed a great want of tact and judgment when tested during her husband's troubles ; her disposition was, however, affectionate, and her nature pure. She transmitted some ability from her brilliant father, but showed little of that ability herself. That father was, indeed, a 'preux chevalier,' 'sans peur' if not altogether 'sans reproche.' Courageous, dashing, vivacious in company, attached to learning, Henry IV of France was dowered with all the graces, but his private life was completely licentious, and cynicism, albeit an enlightened cynicism, was the keynote of his public policy. His better qualities he quite obviously derived from his mother, Jeanne d'Albret, "a queen in whom nothing was woman but her sex, a soul given wholly to manly things, a mind capable of great affairs, a heart invincible by adversities." She was the third of a line of singularly brilliant women. Her husband, Antoine de Bourbon, was an altogether inferior character, at once irresolute and licentious, personal courage being his best attribute.

On the mother's side the heredity of Henrietta Maria was far less satisfactory. Marie de Medici was an unreasonable and hopeless type of woman. Very vain and accordingly ambitious, she proved quite unable to use power when it came to her, and after perpetual quarrels with her husband during his lifetime, was thereafter governed by unworthy favourites. A genuine love of art was the best feature of her character, as a genuine love of science was the best feature in the character of her father, Francis of Tuscany, who, however, in the administration of affairs showed himself a mere bigoted tyrant. His Hapsburg

wife shared the bigotry, which together with her cold hauteur and lack of charm, was so eminently characteristic of her first cousin, Philip II of Spain, and indeed of many other subsequent Hapsburgs.

It is obvious that of all his ancestors, Charles II most resembled his maternal grandfather, of whom, indeed, he was a weaker copy. "Paris vent bien un messe," how Charles would have echoed that saying ! His mental gifts he certainly derived mainly from the line of Jeanne d'Albret, though the influence of the unstable Antoine de Bourbon is also apparent. From the Medici line we can only trace in Charles his love of science, though this may also be attributable to Sophia of Mecklenburg. There are also certain resemblances in his character to the latter's daughter, Anne of Denmark, and in another line to Mary Stewart. Unlike both his parents in most respects, Charles took something from several of the ancestors of both, but the maternal line certainly predominated. This line was entirely southern in its composition, as the paternal line was almost entirely northern, and Charles was perhaps the most complete southerner of all who have occupied the throne of England.

James was certainly more of a northerner, but by no means entirely so, and much as he resembled his father, his bigotry was certainly mainly derived from his Medici-Hapsburg descent. Henry IV he resembled in no respect but licentiousness, and the influence of the latter's ancestry is otherwise negligible ; nor is the influence of the sound and sensible Danish stock at all perceptible in his case. Obstinacy, that most marked feature in his character, is traceable in the direct male line, and affords another presumption of the greater probability of the Darnley descent. But with it may be coupled a possibility of the descent of both obstinacy and bigotry through Mary Stewart from the Guises.

As the characters of all the eight great-grandparents of Charles II and James II are sufficiently well known, a rare occurrence even in royal families, a summary of the characteristics of the brothers as derived from these eight may be added :

- (1) *Darnley* (who may be taken as the ancestor). Little or nothing to Charles, tactless obstinacy to James.
- (2) *Mary Stewart*. Charm to Charles, little direct to James, but perhaps bigotry from the Guises.
- (3) *Frederick of Denmark*. Nothing to Charles, perhaps some slight bigotry to James.
- (4) *Sophia of Mecklenburg*. Love of science, and intellect generally, to Charles, nothing to James.
- (5) *Antoine de Bourbon*. Licentiousness to both.
- (6) *Jeanne d'Albret*. Mental ability generally to Charles and perhaps his wit, conspicuous in her mother Marguerite of France; nothing to James.
- (7) *Francis of Tuscany*. Love of science to Charles, bigotry to James.
- (8) *Joanna of Austria*. Nothing to Charles, bigotry and hauteur to James.

Roughly speaking, five of the eight seem to have transmitted characteristics to Charles, and five also to James, while every one of the eight had some influence on one or other brother. In the case of James, it is, curiously, the direct male and the direct female lines in which this influence can be most clearly traced.

WILLIAM III

PARENTS.

William II, Prince of Orange.
Mary of England.

GRANDPARENTS.

Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange.
Amelia of Solms.
King Charles I.
Henrietta Maria of France.

GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.

William 'the Silent,' Prince of Orange.
Louise de Coligny.
John, Count of Solms.
Agnes of Sayn-Wittgenstein.

King James I.
Anne of Denmark.
Henry IV, King of France.
Marie de Medici.

Though not a Stewart in the male line, obviously William III's characteristics may be studied in connection with his immediate predecessors on the British throne, owing to his maternal descent from that family. The most striking of these characteristics in his case were clearly his considerable mental ability, and his excessively cold and reserved nature. Its ability was not many-sided, he cared nothing for learning or for the arts, and his great qualities were purely those of the statesman. This ability was, without doubt, mainly attributable to the direct male line. William 'the Silent,' Frederick Henry of Orange, and William II of Orange, all alike showed qualities of the highest statesmanship, though the last-named lived too short a time to leave any considerable reputation behind him. Before his early death he had, however, proved himself to be a man of the greatest vigour and determination. Probably in the whole of history there is no other case of such remarkable ability descending for four successive generations in the direct male line. The intermarriages were sound; Louise de Coligny, who belonged to a highly distinguished family, was herself a woman of much charm and force of character, and was adviser to both those able leaders, her stepson, Maurice, and her son, Frederick Henry. Amelia of Solms was almost as notable a character; of her parents little seems to be known, but she herself was vigorous and determined, always respected if not always liked; of a distinguished appearance, she was fond of state and magnificence, and still more fond of her own way.

The third marriage into the Stewart family would *prima facie* have hardly seemed likely to have kept up the ability, but this Mary Stewart was the ablest of the children of Charles I, and would seem to have taken as a whole from the ablest of her ancestors. Celebrated as a girl for her grace, beauty, and intelligence, Mary

showed gravity and decorum beyond her years when called upon to preside at state functions after her early marriage, and as a young widow exhibited determination and sang-froid in difficult times. She was, however, somewhat tactless, and her nature was cold, in both respects bearing some resemblance to her brother James, and the frigid character of her son William was almost certainly inherited from her, as in this respect he differed entirely from his Orange ancestors.

William 'the Silent,' in whose character taciturnity was not in reality a prominent feature, was "constant in disaster, devoted to duty, hopeful in defeat," qualities shared by his great-grandson, but he "bore the load of a people's sorrows with a smiling face," and a smiling face the great-grandson lacked. Frederick Henry was a handsome and chivalrous man with a conciliatory, genial temper, and his son, William II, bid fair to be of much the same type. Amelia of Solms, too, was far from reserved by nature.

We must, therefore, attribute William III's cold disposition to the maternal side, this being perceptible in his grandfather, Charles I, as well as in his mother and his uncle James. It is not easy to trace it further back; it was not apparent in the Danish line, from which line, however, William may well have derived some of his prudence. Most probably this coldness was mainly due to the ultimate Hapsburg descent, but there was also, if the Darnley paternity is correct, a double descent from Henry VII, and to that monarch William III bore obvious resemblances. As a quality it may have been latent for several generations, at any rate it was certainly part of the Stewart complex. The origin of William's ability as a statesman remains, however, easier to ascertain than the origin of his cold and reserved nature.

MARY II AND ANNE

PARENTS.

King James II.
Anne Hyde.

GRANDPARENTS.

King Charles I.
Henrietta Maria of France.
Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon.
Frances Aylesbury.

GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.

King James I.
Anne of Denmark.
Henry IV, King of France.
Marie de Medici.
Henry Hyde.
Mary Langford.
Sir Thomas Aylesbury.
Frances Denman.

Neither Mary nor Anne left much mark in history, but in Mary's case her comparative insignificance was largely due to extrinsic circumstances. Amiable, cheerful, and equable in temper, she, unlike her husband's mother, gained the hearts of the Dutch people; she was, moreover, far from unintelligent and her nature was singularly pure. With some of the vivacity of her uncle, Charles II, she was very unlike him in most respects. Of a most unselfish disposition she subordinated herself entirely to her husband. Had she been the survivor and had reigned as a sole queen regnant, there is little doubt that she would have left a far deeper mark on history. Her unselfish disposition she can hardly have inherited from her father's side.

Her mother, Anne Hyde, had borne herself well in a difficult position; a woman of many talents and accomplishments, she was gifted with discretion and tact, together with a certain grandeur of both manners and spirit. Clarendon was eloquent as a speaker, gifted as a writer, consistent and upright as a statesman, though his abilities in some directions were limited and he was specially unable to adapt himself to changing circumstances. His father, Henry Hyde, was a man of learning and parts who preferred to live the life of an honoured country gentleman "with great cheerfulness and content." Sir Thomas Aylesbury, father of Lady Clarendon, was a man of

erudition, particularly in mathematics, and "a great encourager of learning and learned men." Of the women of the family but little is recorded, but Lady Clarendon was a most devoted wife, and it was probably from her that the sweetness and unselfishness of Queen Mary's character was derived.

In any case Queen Mary was more of a Hyde than a Stewart, and some of the intellectual qualities of the former family undoubtedly descended to her, but her sister Anne inherited neither the intellect of the Hyde connections, nor the accomplishments of the Stewarts. Anne undoubtedly had certain resemblances to her father James, a distinct share of his obstinacy and lack of tact; her better qualities, her naturally affectionate disposition and her attachment to the English Church, were certainly derived from her mother's side.

Anne was, without question, a weak character, decidedly below the average, and Mary can scarcely be described as above it. Their ancestry was curiously varied, the result was morally good, but not at all brilliant. They can have derived little from the more distinguished of their ancestors. Henry IV of France, Clarendon, Aylesbury; but among the others there were sufficient elements of weakness or commonplaceness to account for the sisters, for Mary, however, rather better than for Anne. The origin of the latter's character is certainly more explicable than the origin of that of

James I, but *prima facie*, with her ancestry she ought not to have developed into so stupid, if well-meaning, a woman.

The heredity of the Stewarts presents far more complications than does that of the Tudors. The characteristics of the earlier line are comparatively simple, efficiency was the dominating note. The Stewarts were not efficient, but their characters were remarkably varied. Certainly the fatal quality of tactless obstinacy, with its momentous historical consequences, ran like a thread down the direct male line, not least conspicuous in James II's unfortunate son. But to this quality there were marked exceptions, and the picture on the whole is one of great variety. Remarkable, for example, are the unlikenesses between Mary Stewart and James I, between James I and Charles I, between Charles I and Charles II, between James II and Mary II, between William III and Anne.

The ancestry, in fact, varied from the beginning, grew more and more varied as the successive intermarriages took place. The earlier Stewarts of both lines, the Danish, Bourbon-d'Albret, Medici-Hapsburg, the Orange, and the Hyde families differed markedly in their group characteristics, and the results did not, as in the Tudors, combine into a harmonious whole. Hence the striking contrasts in this line of monarchs, hence also their inexhaustible interest.

